A meeting of the Ben Hill County Board of Health was held September 21, 2022 at 12:00 pm.

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| **Members Present** | **Members Absent** | **Others Present** |
| Daniel Cowan, Chairman  Thelma Graham, Secretary  Heath Parrish  Susan Smith  Mayor Jason Holt  Dawn Clements  Jim Turner |  | Dr. Grow  Dwain Butler  Patrina Bowles  Teresa Giles  Layne Harrell  Julie Parker  Alex Collins  Shirley Brooks  Constance Manley  Stacie Nikki Payne |

1. **Call to Order**

* Mr. Daniel Cowan called the meeting to order for September 21,2022 at 12:03 pm. Mr. Turner opened the meeting with a prayer.

1. **Oath of Office / Dawn Clements**

Patrina Bowles swore in Ms. Dawn Clements as a Member of the Board of Health for Ben Hill County at 12:05 pm.

1. **Public Comments**

* None

1. **Election of Officer / Ben Hill County Board of Health (2022-2024)**

* Mr. Heath Parrish volunteered for the vacant position of Vice-Chairman. Daniel Cowan made a motion to accept and Thelma Graham seconded the motion. All were in favor.

1. **Approval of March 16, 2022 Minutes (Page 3)**

* Thelma Graham made a motion to accept the minutes for March 16, 2022. Heath Parrish seconded the motion with no one opposing.

1. **Business**

**Financial Update – Teresa Giles (Page 7)**

* Ms. Giles explained the Proposed Budget for FY2023 for Ben Hill County Health Department (Page 7). All were in favor of the Proposed Budget with none opposing.
* Ms. Giles explained (Page 9), the description of the Resources and Expenses for the Budget.
* She reported as of August 31st, 41.86% of the Budget Revenue has been received from the Revenue & Budget Summary (Page 11). Next, the Total Revenue and Total Expenses are $689,835.00. Also, the Unassigned Fund Balance is what is left in the Budget from the previous years and Ben Hill is in really good shape. She added, “The State has done a major revamp to try to retain employees and to do retirement better for their employees effective July 1, 2022.
* Ms. Giles related, “Our District was the best in the State for employee retention through the whole COVID process and that we had very little turnover.”
* She also mentioned there is COVID Funding in the Budget to pay part of a Nurses salary. Also, they are projecting not to use any fund balance.
* Dr. Grow added, “Ben Hill has a really good Health Department in a really good Community and the Health Department does an outstanding job with Community involvement here”.
* Ms. Giles reported Ben Hill has 5 RN’s: 3 are full-time, 2 are part-time, 1 LPN, 2 Admin, 1 Environmentalist on staff.

**Public Health Update – William R. Grow, MD, FACP**

* Dr. Grow gave the COVID-19 update informing the Board we are still seeing cases in Georgia. Overall, we are seeing steady declines with mandates being lifted. However, we are still requiring masks in the clinical face to face settings.
* He stated, “We have seen a dramatic decrease in hospitalizations.”
* Dr. Grow relayed, in his opinion, the future holds Boosters. We are currently offering the Bivalent boosters to those who have had the primary series.
* Dr. Grow stated, we have seen not many children. Also, the Booster is available on the same day as someone receiving the flu vaccine.
* Dr. Grow has seen in some counties the new school health clinics taking 99% of the flu vaccines from the Health Department Clinic. However, he does see the advantages of the school clinic, as well.
* He mentioned, “The vast majority of cases and deaths are from the unvaccinated.”
* He reported our District has suffered 875 deaths from the beginning.
* He stated, in Georgia, our District, 58% of the population has been fully vaccinated with 65% having at least 1 vaccination. Ben Hill County, however, has 42% fully vaccinated with 46% having at least 1 COVID vaccination.
* Lastly, Dr. Grow reminded the Board of the Legislative Breakfast planned for the Northern Counties in our District for October 7th at 8:30 am at the Tifton Board of Education. The Legislatures are invited and basically the Nurse Managers will give a report on all the things we have been doing in our Clinics.

1. **Nurse Manager’s Report – Layne Harrell (Page 13)**

* Ms. Harrell updated the Board on the activities the Ben Hill County Health Department has been involved in from July through August. Each month, car seat classes were given and we have been steadily vaccinating the community against COVID 19.
* Ben Hill Health Department has made COVID self-test kits available at no charge to the community and this allows the Staff to provide other services more readily.
* The Staff has participated in the Active Shooter Training and Stop the Bleed Training with an Evacuation/Fire Drill planned for October. Also, Tolisa Smith, RN completed her car seat technician recertification.
* Ms. Harrell informed the Board there were days set aside to do EEDN’s and immunizations for the children in our community to receive the requirements to enter school.
* The Health Department has completed Immunization Audits at the Daycares in our county. Also, 11th grade, Kindergarten, Head Start, 7th grade and Pre-K are all finished, as well.
* She reported we have received flu vaccine consent forms from the students at all the schools and thankfully there is an increase. Also, we have been vaccinating teachers and staff from all the schools throughout the month of September.
* We are currently hosting Drive Thru Flu Clinics on Fridays from 8:30-12. As long as the high dose flu vaccine is available, we will continue.
* We are still offering Moderna vaccines on Mondays and Pfizer vaccines on Thursdays along with the new Bivalent Booster.
* Ms. Harrell stated we are soon to begin the school flu clinics for the students.

1. **Environmental Health Update - Alex Collins (Page 15)**

* Mr. Collins reviewed the Environmental Health Activities for 06/11/2022 through 09/15/2022 adding we approved 1 subdivision on Swan and Frank Rd. This being a first in a long time.
* Mr. Collins informed the Board that all bills for FY23, totaling $16,920 have been sent out with quite a few already paying. This does not include septic tanks and wells.
* Lastly, he relayed there is only 1 Establishment who hasn’t paid for their inspections and a hearing is scheduled for early October.

1. **The Jessamine Place Update – Shirley Brooks/Constance Manley**

* Ms. Shirley Brooks informed the Board of the upcoming retirement of CFO, Constance Manley, effective October 1st. The new Chief Financial Officer will be Ms. Stacie “Nikki” Payne.
* Ms. Brooks noted there were major revisions to the FY2023 Budget. Ms. Manley shared they have 2 major sources for funding which are 90% Medicaid Funding and 10% Grant in Aid Funding.
* Ms. Manley explained the Revisions to the Budget pointing out the increase in the Grant in Aid and the funding for salary increases for the staff from the Special Appropriations given by Gov. Kemp.
* Also, the expenses were revised to show the wage increases, hiring one new LPN, which now makes 4 LPNs on staff. Also, they hired a new accountant**.**
* Ms. Manley reported they were given an Appendix K revision 2 years ago for some additional funding which is approved Retro for July of 2021 for an additional 5%.
* The Board voted on the FY2023 Budget with
* Ms. Brooks informed the Board of the Advisory Board Meeting the Jessamine Place held virtual to approve Steve O’Neil as Chairman, and Wanda Kimbrell as Vice-Chair. Also, new Members, Celanese Floyd, Dorothy Harris, Dr. Lydia Bryant and Dawn Clements were approved.
* The Jessamine Place is currently supporting 20 people living in 17 host homes and 3 people living in double occupancy together as house mates. They are seeking more host home providers. Mr. Brooks noted for Ben Hill County to have 17 host homes is something special, noting there were 21 pre pandemic.
* Ms. Shirley Brooks reported The Jessamine Place has had 22 positive cases of COVID cases this year, 10 being in January alone. They have seen a downturn in cases over the last 8 months. Since the pandemic began, they have supported 28 people who have had COVID, 37 staff members, 9 host home providers, and unfortunately, they did suffer 1 death. Overall, the vaccination rate remains at 81%.
* The agency has passed The Council on Quality and Leadership review and has received CQL Accreditation for the next 4 years.
* Ms. Brooks talked about their biggest challenge being the decrease of their workforce by 21% since the pandemic started and they are working hard to attract and retain new employees.
* The Jessamine Place held their annual event, The Long Road Home, where they named Ocilla Pharmacy, “The 2022, Friend of the Jessamine Place”. Also, they are continuing to celebrate their 50th Anniversary with Mayor Jason Holt making a Proclamation, naming, August 31st as “The Jessamine Place Day”. Reunion and Founders Luncheon will be October 28th at Wiregrass to celebrate the journey and visionaries who made TJP possible.

1. **Announcements**

* Daniel Cowan thanked everyone for coming. There were no other announcements.

1. **Adjournment**

* Heath Parrish made a motion to adjourn The Board of Health meeting at 01:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Thelma Graham, Board Secretary

Julie Parker, Typist